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# Literary Cabinet.

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Si non tantus fructus perciperetur ex his studiis, quantum percipi constat, sed ex his delectatio sola peteretur; tamen hæc animi remissio judicanda esset libero homine dignissima. CICERO.

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VOL. I.] YALE COLLEGE, SATURDAY, JUNE 20, 1807. [No. 14.

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## *The Essayist.*

No. X.

The same subject continued from our last.

BUT, to possess a memory surprisingly retentive, together with a judgment discriminating and correct, is the happiness of few. Man is an imperfect and dependent being, and gifted with such faculties only as are fitted for his situation. Our Creator intended this world for a stage of trial, not of reward; for a place where we might improve, and at the same time be continually reminded of our own weakness. Were our minds to be indelibly impressed with the objects which surround us, they would, perhaps, be more tied down to the things of this world, and have less opportunity to soar to the contemplation of the Deity, and of the eternal state of the soul.

The greater part of mankind feel it a serious inconvenience, that their memories are so imperfect. When they have carefully treasured up anything which they may wish to remember, at the very moment when occasion most calls for its use, they are frequently chagrined to find that it has escaped them, and is irrecoverable. It is this circumstance, which necessitates those who would be learned to be continual-

ly tumbling over their rusty tomes. This, when they have made a little progress, obliges them to retrace their steps, lest ignorance should lead them into the labyrinth of error. Yet with all their diligence, they can obtain only a temporary knowledge of most of their studies. The learned Bentley replied to a teacher of Eaton School, who had told him that he would make his grandson Cumberland as learned as himself: "how can that be, Arthur, when I have *forgotten* more than you ever knew?" I believe there are few men in the world who cannot go farther than Bentley did in this answer, and say they have forgotten more than the amount of their present knowledge. This proneness to forget, retards philosophical improvement, cuts off a portion of our happiness, is very vexatious in business, and has an universal influence on human affairs.

Such being the effects of bad memories, every one must wish not to be subject to them. The question then is, how are they to be avoided? That they can be, in a great measure, is manifest, though they cannot be wholly.—There are three ways, by which we may possess the power of reviving impressions once made, ideas once lodged, in the mind.—

It may be hereditary, it may be the result of favorable circumstance in our earlier years, or it may be the prize of our own efforts for its attainment. Over the two first of these methods we have no control: with respect to the latter, we are at liberty to do as we please.

There are those, and the number is by no means small, who have been able to improve memories originally weak. It has been well said by a certain writer, that to observe the arts which these men use, is to make a collection of principles on the subject of the memory, and to reduce the business of acquiring it to a system. The result of such observation, would perhaps be no more than the conviction that attention and repetition, must be, as Mr. Locke has taught, the foundation of all acquired powers of remembrance. We know by experience that whatever draws close attention, and can be repeated with pleasure, becomes fixed in our memory. The idea of it is ever lively, and ever ready to assist the mind in thinking.

When subjects are not of themselves interesting, we ought to endeavour to make them so; by viewing them in various points of light, by reflecting on their importance, and by considering their relations to other parts of our knowledge. This last method is particularly useful. How few ideas should we have in our store houses were it not for the associations which exist among them! When put together it is difficult for any of them to escape, and by tracing the chain we may ever find such links of it as we may wish to use.

Proportional to the exercise of the memory in either of these ways, or in any other, will be its

strength. The powers of the mind, like those of the body, are developed and matured by use.—The habit of committing to memory striking passages, fine poetry, or pieces of eloquence, enlarges the retentive faculty. I knew a person who found so many beauties in Thomson's Seasons, as that by frequently dwelling on, and repeating them, he got the whole work by heart. We are told too, that for the same reason, Fox could repeat almost the whole Iliad of Homer.

Other rules and other examples illustrating those rules, might be given: but the main principles have been noticed, and these desultory remarks are already sufficiently protracted. Every one who has had any experience knows that memory is improvable; and every one, who has made any observation, or who is at all conversant with books, knows how it may be improved.

### *On the Writings of Cowper.*

I read Cowper, with more pleasure than I do almost any other of the English poets. He has so much versatility of poetic genius, such felicity of thought and novelty of association, that he is sure always to captivate the "mind of desultory man." I wander over his pages with emotions something similar to what we experience, in travelling through a delightful country, where amid changing scenery, and variegated prospects, we lose the measure of time, and only regret that a passage so pleasant should appear so short. His lines have not so splendid imagery, so much smoothness, and compactness of expression as Pope's; but to me they appear to possess more of



the genuine inspiration of poetry. Cowper is a poet who speaks to the heart. He touches all its chords, and awakens all its moral feelings, and finest affections.—He brings us insensibly into love with the milder virtues, and mitigates the evils of life, with the balm of christian consolation.—He explored the inmost recesses of the human heart, was acquainted with all its sympathies, and possessed the power of drawing them forth in succession by the magic of his lyre. His poetry is not burdened with unmeaning epithets, nor tricked out with the finery of words, to atone for the deficiencies of fanciful conception. He displays no elaboration of stile, and if his lines are sometimes prosaic and inharmonious, they are rarely feeble.

Cowper's descriptions are eminently beautiful. He viewed nature with the eye of a keen observer, and laid hold of all those delicate features, which escape the notice of common minds. He describes them with ease, force, elegance and perspicuity, and we wonder how peculiarities so beautiful, could ever have escaped our observation.

He remarked the voluptuous excesses, and the vain pursuits of the world, with the feelings of a man and the indignation of a moralist. His satire is free from those personalities of allusion, which excite the anger, and often strengthen the obstinacy of those, whom satire is intended to reform. He displays no cynical asperity nor misanthropic disgust, and while he spares the man, he paints his criminal indulgences in colors too vivid to be mistaken, and too strong to be disregarded. Who, that is not lost to sensibility, ever closed the Task, without feeling a new

ardor in the cause of truth and virtue, and kindlier sympathies towards his fellow-man?

Of his Translations, there is a diversity of opinions. Their intrinsic merit, is rarely attended to; for they are viewed in the light of comparison. But between his translations and Pope's, there scarcely can exist any rivalry. Their plans do not admit of any. If, however, their relative worth is to be estimated, Pope's must be acknowledged the handsomer poem, Cowper's the more faithful translation. Whoever wishes to see Homer decked with the elegance, refinement and splendor of the eighteenth century, will read Pope; and he who wishes to see the simplicity of manners, and native costume of the "father of Poets," in Cowper, will have those wishes answered.

Cowper's letters, written principally to his intimate friends, are models in their kind. No pomp nor strut nor affectation, but all is ease and familiarity. They are the transcripts of a heart, with sensibilities delicate as the "apple of the eye."

Cowper was much shrouded in melancholy, but his genius bursts through the gloom which envelops him, and like the sun emerging from the clouds, appears more brilliant for having been some time "shorn of his beams." A genius like his would have been the boast of any age and any country in which it had appeared, and the works of Cowper will be perused with increasing pleasure, until taste is despoiled of its purity, and virtue for us, has lost all its allurements.

K.

FOR THE CABINET.

Mons. Cravat, to the votaries of fashion in New-Haven, sendeth greeting.

MY BRETHREN,

HAVING lately arrived from Paris, the temple of fashion, the toy-shop of the world, the *hot-bed* of beaux and belles; I think I cannot better evince my high respect for you, and my sincere veneration for the Goddess whom we adore; than by giving you some account of the progress which her votaries on the other side of the Atlantic have made towards the gaund object of our religion.

I heartily commiserate with you, my brethren, in the misfortune of your being so far removed from the immediate and full fruition of the presence and influence of our Goddess; and precluded from beholding the meridian splendors of her triumphant reign.

Particularly, my brethren, I lament to see your extreme backwardness in the improvements of the *Rattan*; and to hear how little you know of its design and use; and perhaps I cannot render you any more important service than to give you *the information in these particulars*, in which you are so deeply interested.

All religious denominations have had their insignia. The Mahometans have had their crescent and the Christians their cross: but Fashion has been without hers, till Mons. Queu, high priest of her temple at Paris, in a late manifesto to her votaries throughout the world, recommended the assumption of the rattan for this important purpose. A proposal so reasonable and judicious, and which reflected so much honor on the illustrious personage who suggested it, raised the esteem of our European brethren for the author

of it almost to adoration; and could not fail of an universal and eager reception. It is needless to detail the many useful and ornamental variations which this badge of our order has undergone at Paris. I am only solicitous to announce to you that it has, by its last improvement, attained the utmost degree of ornament and utility, of which, from its nature, it seems susceptible. By this alteration it is lengthened to 8 feet, 4 inches and 1 tenth, has a silver capped head, about six inches below which, is a small ring.—Through this ring passes a loop of blue ribbon, which, after the beau has bestridden the rattan, is fastened to a button of the vest or pantaloons, or holden in the hand of the rider as may be most convenient: and thus with another very small rattan in his hand, he is properly equipped for making his appearance in public.

Although this custom rapidly spreads through Europe, yet so great are the political differences between the English and French, that the beaux of London cannot entirely conform to their Parisian brethren, even with respect to the ceremonies of our common religion. For they have, upon their own authority, adapted a hollow cylinder to the original rattan, and thus converted it into a syringe, with which they amuse themselves and others as they walk the streets, whenever they can be supplied with water.

I feel the strongest confidence, my brethren, that your refined taste and sense of decorum will dictate to you the true, Parisian use of the rattan, and the rejection of the London perversion.

(Signed) CRAVAT.

P. S. The belles will be pleased to accept as my apology for ad-



dressing the beaux first, my strong solicitude for their critical situation with respect to the subject above discussed ; while they are assured that, hereafter, their full share of my attention shall be paid to them.

CRAVAT.

*On the Reverence for Antiquity.*

THE great distinction which has existed between the degrees of refinement in men of different ages of the world, is a subject which has often engaged the speculations of the curious, and the researches of the profound. Concerning the moral causes which may lead the mind to an astonishing degree of improvement in one period, and those which may occasion its equally surprizing barrenness in another, we may often obtain much satisfaction. But as these tend rather to heighten than to begin improvement, and as they are often in action in the age when the reverse of their supposed effect is produced, the inquisitive philosopher has sought for other reasons in the science of physics, in which he reposes with unshaken confidence. Whether a peculiar state of the climate has a sufficient influence over the rational faculty of man, to exalt him from the character of the brute creation, and to assimilate him to his Creator, may be seriously questioned ; until one more powerful than a Newton shall discover in our atmospheric fluid some latent particles of the *aura divina*. This therefore being a subject more adapted to the amusement of the theorist, than the instruction of the moralist ; let us confine our attention to the judgment of mankind upon that period, which of all others, has re-

ceived the warmest eulogiums. No subject with which we have the means of being so deeply conversant, has ever been so partially managed as a consideration of the excellencies of the ancient Greeks and Romans. It is true that different opinions have been formed by different authors concerning them, according as the ages or countries have differed in which they have lived, and according as have been the particular objects of their enquiries. Judging of their scientific attainments, the philosopher and astronomer, the chymist and physician disregard them with a sneer of contempt, as ignorant of the first laws of nature, and of the true use of the productions of the earth. A Locke we shall ever find pitying their ignorance respecting the most useful parts of knowledge ; while the Moralist will as strenuously declare them utterly void of information concerning the first and dearest interests of mankind. But however severe the sarcasms of the scientific, yet the ancients will never be diminished in the eyes of the man of refinement. They will never want his highest commendations, for the beauties of their language, their taste and eloquence. And tho the Moralist should shed tears of blood over the degeneracy of Paganism, yet he never will erase from the mind of the scholar his reverence for antiquity. Wherever we find men deluded by a passion for oratory—the representation of a curious picture—the din of arms and shedding of blood, there these ancient states will meet with the warmest encomiasts. Observations from the literati of Greece and Rome are introduced into every dissertation when we strive for a beautiful

simile, whether it be of taste, liberty, virtue or refinement. Accustomed to read their histories from our infancy with admiration and delight, and to view their skilfully painted heroes in the light of truth, we with readiness adopt the opinion of the great Montesquieu, who once asserted "that to think of surpassing the ancients in any respect, would be not to know them." Nor have the panegyrics on the refinement of this enlightened period, been confined solely to the thoughtless and passionate; but many, who would most strenuously oppose their heathenish rites and institutions, have extolled their actions as the perfection of human virtue.

Their forms of government have been studied and eulogized by individuals, states and empires. France but a few years since, astonishing as it is, exhibited a strong instance of the partiality of the moderns for these ancient institutions. Many of the first characters of that nation proposed that the states of Greece should be the model in every respect, by which they should form their republic. This they suggested, being firmly persuaded that if they could build on those republics, they should soon arrive at the summit of state perfection. How far there is ground for this extravagant praise of the ancients on the one hand, and censure on the other, will form an interesting subject for our literary department. Should circumstances favor the wishes of the writer, he will pursue the subject in a series of essays for the Cabinet, but if he is disappointed, he will listen with pleasure to the reflections which these observations may suggest to such as peruse them.

DREAMS have long been the subject of philosophical enquiry, while the cause of them has in a great measure been hidden, and their design unknown. They are sometimes supposed to originate from the peculiar disposition of the mind; sometimes from the state of the animal frame; and not unfrequently esteemed to be sent by Providence to make us acquainted with the events of futurity.

But there is one kind of dreams which excite little interest as objects of speculation or of practical concern. I mean those which happen to us when *awake*. These are not uncommon: but differ wholly from those of which I have been speaking.

By the first, we are sometimes supposed to be apprized of events which are afterwards to take place: but by the latter, we are induced to cherish hopes which prove fallacious and to prosecute plans which end in disappointment.

The cause of these dreams is in my opinion by no means physical; they generally flow from an imagination, unimproved by age, or experience; but warmed with hope, and enlivened by youth.

To illustrate my meaning more clearly, I will recite a few examples which have fallen under my own observation. Lothario while in College, having read an encomium on Cicero, soon after dreamed, that his own talents were peculiarly adapted to the profession of the law: and as the study of it naturally tends to form the statesman, he was already in his own imagination declaiming on the floor of Congress, and directing the grand council of the nation.



The impression which this dream made on his mind was strong and lasting. He immediately applied himself with diligence to the study of the law, and Puffendorff Vattel, Grotius and Blackstone, were for a long time his only companions. Commencing business, he found that others had not so high an opinion of his talents as he expected, and that age and experience were necessary to extensive and successful practice.

Discouraged by these circumstances, Lothario with a sigh resigned all hope to future advancement, relinquished exertion, and instead of an able statesman, became an insignificant attorney.

Melissus, while young, dreamed of domestic happiness. He intended to retire from the bustle of the world, and spend his days in tranquillity and peace. His future consort, who was to parti-

cipate in his pleasures, and sympathize in his misfortunes, was one, whom he not only admired for her set of features, but also adored for the endowments of her mind. These delusions of fancy he resolved to realize. He accordingly associated more with the fair sex, in order that his choice might be made with better judgment. But he found that one was a coquette, another was vain, and that a third could converse on nothing but the fashions of the day. Melissus withdrew from the company of ladies with disgust, he now renounces the whole sex, and is himself a bachelor.

If I am not dreaming myself, when I imagine that the present essay is worthy of a place in the Cabinet, what I have now said, is sufficient to elucidate to my idea of *waking dreams*.

## The Bower.

.....Sometimes  
We bid bright Fiction to resemble Truth,  
And sometimes speak what Truth herself approves.

HES. THEOG.

### SONG.

OUR beaux of late, in pompous state,  
Display quite gaudy shows, Sir;  
Some strut about, and make a rout  
With things astride the nose, Sir:  
These things do tend, (as they pretend  
While they escape detection,)  
To baffle fate, or compensate  
For optic imperfection.

This may be shown, (if truth were  
known,)

To be a mere pretence, Sir.

No charming belle, who knows them  
well,

Will e'er make their defence, Sir:  
She must admire, in balls the 'squire,  
Who hops with graceless joggles;  
Such beauty lies, in his wall-eyes,  
When hid beneath his goggles.

Another buck, who had the luck,  
(Led on by youthful passion)  
Behind, his hair to shave all bare;  
For that was all the fashion,  
Will now, in mood of monkey-brood,  
Tie on a dangling tail, Sir,  
Since he does find, no cues behind,  
In gallantry will fail, Sir.

There's still one more, that claim'd be-  
fore,

By right, our nice attention:  
It is that beau, who deigns to show  
Whiskers of huge dimension.  
From ear to ear—a semi-sphere,  
Encircling 'bout the throat, Sir,  
That makes the Wight, majestic sight,  
As is that beau the *Goat*, Sir.

But should you ask, of me the task,  
Of telling his intention;

If nought deter, I'd you refer,  
To belles that I can mention.  
They'll frankly own, (against their  
boon)

"His grave and rev'rend face, Sir,  
"With whiskers arm'd, Flirtilla  
charm'd,  
"And all the female race, Sir."

I might go on, throughout the town,  
Give other beaux the lash, Sir,  
But then I fear, that some who hear,  
Would trembling stand abash'd, Sir,  
Lest in his rout, to search all out,  
They feel the songster's wand, Sir.  
Besides they may, hereafter say,  
"Ah! Bard, thou art the man, Sir."

### A HOT DAY,

*Written in a Hot Night.*

WHAT a plague's a summer break-  
fast,

Eat whate'er you will;  
A roll is but a nauseous thing,  
Toast more nauseous still.

Then how to pass the time away  
Till dinner; there's the doubt,  
You're hot if you stay in the house,  
You're hot if you go out.

When dinner comes—Lord help us all,  
Such frying, such a stew;  
You are hot if you don't touch a bit,  
Your'e hotter if you do.

Then after dinner what to do,  
No knowing where to rove;  
The gentlemen are hot below,  
The ladies hot above.

And now the kettle comes again;  
That's not the way to cool one:  
Tea makes an empty stomach hot,  
And hotter still a full one.

But then an evening walk's the thing,  
Nor if you're hot before;  
For he who sweats when he sits still,  
Will when he moves sweat more.

Well, now the supper's come, and  
come

To make bad worse, I wot;  
For supper while it heats the cool,  
Will never cool the hot.

And bed which cheers the cold man's  
heart,

Helps not the hot a pin:  
For he who sweats when out of bed,  
Sweats ten times more when in.

### LINES ADDRESSED TO FLORA.

Sweet collection of charms from the  
smiles of the morn,

Nicely deck'd with the blossoms of  
May!

Thy virtues are such as a Seraph a-  
dorn,

And make joyous the regions of day.  
Thus encircled in love, dear girl, when  
the world

Frowns with trouble and sorrow and  
woe,

When the shafts of disease and mis-  
fortune are hurl'd,

To blast ev'ry prospect below;

'Tis thine, with compassion each sor-  
row to quell,

With kindness each pang to allay;

'Tis thine, with thy smiles ev'ry grief  
to dispel,

And look gloomy despondence to  
day.

Oh then when a heart beats pulsations  
sincere,

May thine beat respondent in love,

And a union be blest thro' life's rough  
career,

And crown'd with fresh glory above.

L. M.

### A CHARADE.

To calm the passions, sooth and cheer,  
My first is sought and found;  
Bids roll the warm extatic tear,  
And makes the heart rebound.

My \*last is common to each kind  
Of animated matter;

But when its with my first combin'd,  
The rarest thing in nature.

\* If any, reading this, are unwilling  
to be numbered promiscuously with the  
animal productions of nature, let them  
prove themselves worthy of a higher  
sphere, by showing that they have enough  
of "my last" to solve this riddle.

### ANOTHER TO CHARLOTTE.

Fair Charlotte, you'll spoil that pretty  
red face,

That blushes so sweetly and smiles  
with such grace,

If you don't get up quickly, and wash  
your rheum-eyes;

For lo! old Aurora now peeps from  
the skies:

And beldam Aurora wont leave you a  
rose,

If you don't get up quickly, and slip on  
your clothes.